



# AN ASSESSMENT OF LIFE SKILLS AMONG DIFFERENT AGE GROUP OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MYSORE DISTRICT

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## ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to assess the Life skills among High School Students of Mysore District. The present paper focusses upon investigating the life skills in different age group of High School Students. Descriptive survey research method was employed for data collection. The study consists of 1000 High School Students (age group - 333 of 14 years, 333 of 15 years and 334 of 16 years). Data was collected with the help of Life Skills Scale developed by Anjum Ahamad and Saba Parveen was used for the study. The scale consists of 40 items divided into 10 dimensions those are Self-awareness, Empathy, Critical thinking, Decision making, Problem solving, Effective communication, Creative thinking, Interpersonal relationship, Coping with stress and Coping with emotion. The tool has reliability and validity established. Personal information schedule was also included to collect the demographic data. Mean, SD and t- test was used to for analysis of data. The major findings of the study shows that the mean scores for life skills among 14-year-old students ( $M = 153.6$ ,  $SD = 13.19$ ), 15-year-old students ( $M = 156.0$ ,  $SD = 13.37$ ), and 16-year-old students ( $M = 150.1$ ,  $SD = 14.26$ ) indicate variability in life skill levels across age groups. The statistical analysis yielded a significant F-value of 16.09 ( $df = 2, 997$ ,  $p = .001$ ), suggesting that age plays a significant role in shaping students' life skills.

**KEYWORDS:** Life Skills, High School Students, Life Skills Scale, Descriptive Survey Method, Age Group.

## INTRODUCTION

High School Students being in the stage of adolescence face a lots of physical, physiological, emotional and social adjustment problems due to puberty. It not only affects their physical health but also their psychological health. According to Joseph(2018) the probability of facing different issues and problems increases during this period. Building Life Skills in this term helps them understand themselves and makes them feel more comfortable dealing with the problems.

Life skills awareness are the basic skills that assist adolescents acquire the competences that are required to deal with the facts of life they will experience. Life skills enable individuals to succeed in the environment they live in (Danish and Nellen, 1997).

According to the list of Life Skills given by WHO(1997) the skills like self-awareness, empathy, critical thinking, creative thinking, decision making, ability of problem solving, effective communication, interpersonal relationship, coping with stress and coping with emotions all these skills are formed cognition, emotions and behaviours of the individual.

Life Skills are very instrumental in the future success of the student since they enhance employability, promote personal growth and facilitate effective problem solving. Developing life skills results in improved relationships, adaptability and resilience for attaining long-term professional and personal growth. Life skills may be viewed as a range of psycho-social and cognitive abilities that equip children to make informed

decisions and choices, manage their emotional well-being and communicate effectively. (Singh and Menon, 2015).

Dhingra and Chauhan (2017) conducted a study upon the level of life skills among two age groups of secondary school students i.e. 14-15 years and 15 -16 years and they observed that significant differences exist in life skills between these two groups.

Chavda and Trivedi (2014) studied level of life skills among three age groups i.e. 11- 13 years, 14-17 years and 18-20 years and they found significant difference in levels of life skills between 11-13 year and 14- 17 years and 11-13 years and 18-20 years. Interestingly no significant difference was depicted between 14-17 years and 18 -20 years. They concluded that age and maturity are major factor that affects life skills development.

Haas et al., (2015) has examined the effects of age, gender and involvement on the development of life skills among youth of age group 8 to 18 for 1 year. Regression analysis had shown significant influence of gender, age and involvement on the development of life skills. Results revealed that level of competencies of females was more than the males at the beginning of the programme that changed during the year suggesting changes in designs of the programme for engaging, retaining, and affecting males in better way in life skills development.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Objective of the Study:** To examine the difference in age

group of High School Students in various dimensions of life skills, including Self- awareness, Empathy, Critical thinking, Decision making, Problem solving, Effective communication, Creative thinking, Interpersonal relationships, Coping with stress and Coping with emotion.

**Hypothesis:** There is a significant difference between age groups of High School students in various dimensions of life skills, including self-awareness, empathy, critical thinking, decision-making, problem- solving, effective communication, creative thinking, interpersonal relationships, coping with stress, and coping with emotion.

#### Variables:

**Independent Variable:** High School Students, Gender, Age, Domicile, Family Type.

**Dependent Variable:** Life Skills

#### Operational Definitions:

**Life Skills:** Refers to the set of abilities and competencies essential for dealing effectively with the challenges of life. The life skills scale developed by Anjum Ahamad and Saba Parveen(2021) will be used as the reference to measure these skills.

**High School Students:** Refers to students enrolled in the 8th, 9th, or 10th standard in a high school in Mysore district. This is based on school documents.

**Age:** The age of the students was recorded based on the information provided in the personal information schedule designed by the researcher.

**Gender:** The gender of the students (male or female) was recorded based on responses in the personal information schedule.

**Class:** The grade or standard the student belongs to (8th, 9th, or 10th) was recorded in the personal information schedule.

**Domicile:** The Domicile (Urban and Rural) of the students was recorded based on the responses of the students given in the Personal Information Schedule.

**Family Type:** The Family type (Joint Family and Nuclear Family) of the students was recorded based on the responses of the students in the Personal Information Schedule.

#### Research Design:

The research adopted a Descriptive survey research Design. The design will involve:

- **Survey Method:** A structured questionnaire was used to collect data on the life skills of high school students.
- **Questionnaires:** Standardized life skills scales was administered to the students to quantify their levels of life skills across various dimensions.

#### Participants:

The present study involved a total of 1000 high school students from Mysore district, ensuring representation of age group - 333 of 14 years, 333 of 15 years and 334 of 16 years. The students were selected from various high schools across the district to create a representative sample of the student population.

To assess the life skills of these students, the Life Skills Scale (English and Kannada Version) was administered. The Life Skills Scale developed in English and later translated into Kannada by the subject expert translators to ensure linguistic accuracy and cultural relevance.

The selected schools for data collection included: Morarji Desai Residential School, Varakunda, Morarji Desai Model Residential School, S. Hoskote, Sri Kuvempu High School, Kuvempunagar, Shri Adichunchungiri Central School, Kuvempunagar, Rotary West School, Saraswathipuram, Rotary Midtown Mysore, Karnataka Public School, Kuvempunagar, Mysore Lions School, Bannimantapa, Mysuru, Bharatha Seva Dala High School, Saraswathipuram, Morarji Desai Residential School, Sabbanahalli (Bilikere), Hunsur Taluk, Babu Jagjivan Ram School, Rajivnagar, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Residential School, Yelwala, Shri Nataraj Public School, Mysuru, Sree Nataraja High School, Mysuru.

Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the respective Headmasters/Headmistresses/Principals of the selected high schools. Additionally, informed consent was sought from the participating students, ensuring voluntary participation in the study.

#### Tools:

**Personal Information Schedule:** Personal information schedule was used to collect the general data of the high school students. It consisted of the information like name, age, gender, class, School Name, Domicile (Rural/Urban), Family Type(Joint/Nuclear).

**Life Skills Scale:** Life skills scale developed by Anjum Ahamad and Saba Parveen(2021) was applied for the study. The scale consists of 40 items. Divided into 10 dimensions those are Self- awareness, Empathy, Critical thinking, Decision making, Problem solving, Effective communication, Creative thinking, Inter personal relationship, Coping with stress, Coping with emotion. The test has reliability and validity established.

#### PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

The study followed by a systematic and structured approach to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. The procedure consisting of the following key steps:

##### Step 1: Preparation and Design

The researcher designed the Personal Information Schedule and selected the Life Skills Scale for data collection. The Personal Information Schedule was developed to record essential demographic details such as age, gender, class, and domicile. The Life Skills Scale was chosen as the primary tool for assessing various dimensions of life skills among high

school students.

### Step 2: Translation of Tools

To ensure accessibility and ease of understanding for all students, the Life Skills Scale was translated into Kannada by expert translators. This step was crucial in minimizing language barriers and ensuring that students from different linguistic backgrounds could comprehend and respond to the scale effectively.

### Step 3: Pilot Study

Before administering the Life Skills Scale to the full sample, a pilot study was conducted. The pilot study aimed to:

- Test the reliability and clarity of the translated version.
- Identify any ambiguities or difficulties in understanding the questionnaire.
- Assess the time required for completion of the scale.
- Ensure that the scale was appropriate for the target age group. Based on the findings from the pilot study, necessary modifications were made to enhance the clarity and effectiveness of the questionnaire.

### Step 4: Data Collection

Once the final version of the Life Skills Scale was ready, data collection was initiated in various high schools across Mysore district. The following procedure was followed:

1. Permission was obtained from the respective Headmasters / Headmistresses / Principals of the selected schools.
2. Informed consent was obtained from participating students to ensure voluntary participation.
3. The researcher visited each school and introduced themselves to the students. The objectives and importance of the study were explained clearly.
4. A rapport was established with the students to create a comfortable environment for participation. Students were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and used for research purposes only.
5. A total of 1000 students (age group - 333 of 14 years, 333 of 15 years and 334 of 16 years) were provided with the Life Skills Scale and detailed instructions on how to complete it.
6. Students were guided on carefully reading and responding to the items on the scale. Any doubts were clarified before they proceeded.
7. Once the students completed the Life Skills Scale, the questionnaires were collected for further processing.

### Step 5: Data Analysis

After the completion of data collection, the following steps were carried out for analysis:

- Responses were checked based on the Life Skills Scale Manual.
- Raw scores were calculated for each student.
- The raw scores were converted into Z-scores to standardize the data.
- The level of life skills was classified according to the Life Skills Scale Manual, ensuring consistency in interpretation.
- Appropriate statistical techniques were used to analyze the data, including descriptive and inferential statistics to

examine differences and correlations among variables.

This systematic approach ensured that the study was conducted in a scientifically rigorous manner, providing valid and reliable insights into the life skills of high school students in Mysore district.

### Statistical Analysis and Interpretation:

The data collected was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to interpret the data:

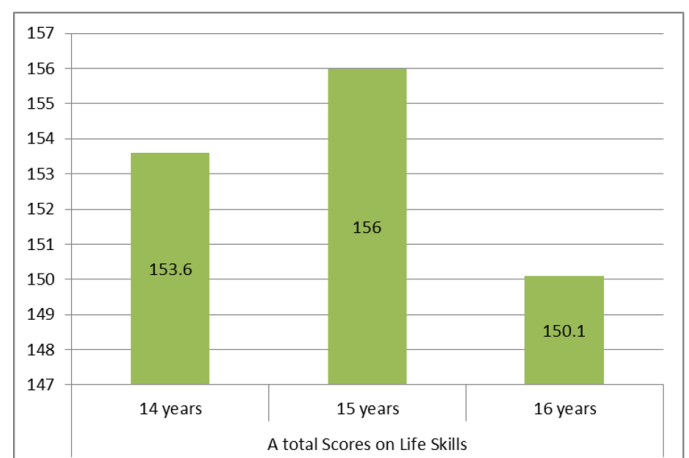
- Descriptive Statistics: Measures such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution were used to summarize the data.
- Inferential Statistics: T-tests, ANOVA, and other relevant statistical tests were applied to examine differences in life skills between age groups - 333 of 14 years, 333 of 15 years and 334 of 16 years and across other variables (e.g., class level, age).

This analysis will provide the necessary insights into the life skills possessed by high school students and help in identifying age-based differences.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Shows the N, Mean, Standard Deviation and f ratio on difference in life skill levels among students of different age groups (14, 15, and 16 years).**

	Group			A total Scores on Life skills			
		N	Mean	SD	df	f	p
A total Scores on Life Skills	14 years	333	153.6	13.19	2	16.09	.001
	15 years	333	156.0	13.37			
	16 years	334	150.1	14.26	999		
	Total	1000					



**Graph Shows the mean score difference in life skill levels among students of different age groups (14, 15, and 16 years).**

The analysis of the results reveals a significant difference in life skill levels among students of different age groups (14, 15, and 16 years). As presented in Table the mean scores for life skills among 14-year-old students ( $M = 153.6$ ,  $SD = 13.19$ ), 15-year-old students ( $M = 156.0$ ,  $SD = 13.37$ ), and 16-year-old students ( $M = 150.1$ ,  $SD = 14.26$ ) indicate variability in life skill levels across age groups. The statistical analysis yielded a significant F-value of 16.09 ( $df = 2, 997$ ,  $p = .001$ ), suggesting that age plays a significant role in shaping students' life skills. The observed differences in means, as depicted in Figure further illustrate that 15-year-olds demonstrated the highest life skill levels, followed by 14-year-olds, while 16-year-olds had the lowest scores.

The interpretation of these findings suggests that life skill levels do not remain constant across adolescence but fluctuate with age. The highest mean score observed in 15-year-old students may indicate a peak in skill acquisition before a decline at age 16. This decline could be attributed to increased academic and social pressures that affect students' ability to apply learned life skills effectively. Additionally, developmental and cognitive changes during adolescence may contribute to these variations. The findings underscore the importance of targeted life skills training, particularly for older adolescents, to enhance their adaptive capabilities.

The hypothesis testing supports the alternative hypothesis (H), which states that there is a significant difference in life skill levels among students of different age groups. The statistical significance ( $p = .001$ ) confirms that the observed differences are unlikely due to chance, providing strong evidence that life skill levels vary across 14, 15, and 16-year-olds. Given the significance of these findings, further research may be needed to explore the underlying factors contributing to these variations and to develop interventions aimed at fostering life skills across different stages of adolescence.

#### **H: There is a significant difference in life skill levels among students of different age groups (14, 15, and 16 years).**

The findings of this study align with previous research suggesting that life skills develop dynamically throughout adolescence. Studies have shown that mid-adolescence is a crucial period for acquiring and refining life skills due to cognitive, emotional, and social maturation (Larson et al., 2015). The peak observed in the 15-year-old group is consistent with findings by Steinberg (2017), who emphasized that at this stage, adolescents exhibit heightened cognitive flexibility and social awareness, enabling them to effectively apply life skills. Furthermore, research by Gresham and Elliott (2019) highlights that structured life skills programs at this age significantly enhance competencies such as decision-making, problem-solving, and interpersonal communication. These studies provide support for the current findings, reinforcing the notion that adolescence is a period of growth in life skills, albeit with fluctuations across different ages.

However, contradictory findings exist in the literature. Some studies suggest that life skills development follows a more linear trajectory, with continuous improvement as individuals gain

more experience and exposure (Santrock, 2021). In contrast to the observed decline at age 16 in this study, other research has reported that older adolescents demonstrate stronger life skills due to increased opportunities for independent decision-making and problem-solving (Eccles & Roeser, 2016). These discrepancies may be attributed to variations in educational systems, cultural contexts, and environmental influences. For instance, in some settings, 16-year-olds may receive more structured guidance and real-world exposure, enhancing their life skills, while in other contexts, academic stress and external pressures may hinder their ability to apply these skills effectively.

Several factors may explain the observed decline in life skills among 16-year-olds. Increased academic demands, peer pressure, and the transition toward higher education or career planning may create stress that affects students' confidence in utilizing their life skills (Blakemore, 2018). Additionally, socio-emotional changes during late adolescence, such as identity exploration and increased autonomy, could lead to shifts in priority, potentially impacting the development and application of life skills (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2017). These findings highlight the need for targeted interventions that support older adolescents in maintaining and strengthening their life skills, particularly in areas such as stress management, decision-making, and emotional regulation.

In conclusion, the current study supports the hypothesis that life skill levels significantly differ across age groups, with 15-year-olds exhibiting the highest scores. While these results align with prior studies on adolescent development, they also challenge the notion of a steady progression in life skills acquisition. The observed decline at age 16 underscores the importance of addressing contextual factors that may influence life skill retention and application. Future research should explore longitudinal patterns of life skill development and examine the effectiveness of tailored interventions aimed at supporting adolescents as they navigate the complexities of their developmental transitions.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The present study found that statistically significant difference concerning demographic variable of age suggesting that age plays a significant role in shaping students' life skills. Life skills are very essential for High School Students.

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